

# The Guardian

Exhibit #7



## From Brisbane to Puerto Rico: how a \$38m Covid-19 test kit deal turned sour

The obscure Australian company Promedical said it could supply kits desperately needed by the US territory. But its claims did not stand up to scrutiny

Don Smea and Christopher Krause

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The company had made promises to a strange cast of intermediaries working for the Puerto Rican government, saying it was able to quickly supply large quantities of desperately needed Covid-19 antibody tests as part of a US\$38m (A\$59m) deal.

"I watched this video and this guy is being interviewed in front of a garbage truck, there was a garbage truck behind him, backing up," Colón-Ramos tells Guardian Australia.

"I became worried about who was supplying these important tests to Puerto Rico, where my parents and many loved ones live."



A lab technician uses a rapid test to examine a blood sample taken in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Photograph: Ricardo Arduengo/AFP via Getty Images

The US\$38m deal was Puerto Rico's single biggest expenditure on testing.

It collapsed.

Promedical was never paid, no final agreement was reached, and the tests never materialised in San Juan. Puerto Rico - where testing and contact tracing was the primary strategy against Covid-19 - is now in a testing crisis.

The deal's collapse, while unlikely to have been Promedical's fault, has prompted global scrutiny of the claims the company was making at the height of the pandemic.

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